

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 23, 2005. Claims 1-12 and 14 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 11 and 14 being in independent form. Claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application.

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Applicants have deleted the recitation directed to “a plurality of flexible protrusions extending from said inner surface capable of resiliently conforming to the gripping section of the article” thereby rendering this objection moot.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1-12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,296,409 (Cherry et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,601,598 (Schwartz et al.).

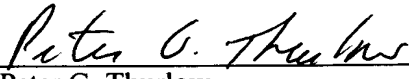
Applicants submit that this rejection is moot in light of the amendment to Claims 1, 11 and 14. Applicants submit that nothing has been found in any of the prior art included in the Notice of References previously provided by the Examiner or in Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement submitted in this application. Support in the specification for the features of the amended claims can be found at least at page 9, paragraph [0030] of the specification and at least as shown in Figures 1-4, 7 and 8.

The other claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention individual reconsideration the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if a telephone call could help resolve any remaining items.

Respectfully submitted,

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